

"Finally, the inhabitants of the several islands of an archipelago are commonly specifically distinct, yet plainly closely related; all of them, however, show a less close relationship to the inhabitants of the nearest mainland. Thus, when the Beagle visited the Galapagos Archipelago, located between 500 and 600 miles west of South America, Darwin felt that he was stepping upon American soil because of the obvious similarity of the plants and animals of these islands to those of the South American continent. The Galapagos islands include 332 species of flowering plants. Of these, 172 species, more than half of the total, are endemic, and many species are restricted to one or a few islands in the archipelago. Yet all of these plants show close relationship to South American plants. But the climate and the geological character of the islands are utterly different from those of South America, hence the relationship of their plants cannot be understood on the basis of creation of similar plants for similar lands, but only on the basis of migration of plants from the continent to the outlying islands, with subsequent differentiation. The Bermuda islands are located about 700 miles off the coast of North Carolina, and its inhabitants are all North American in character. Many terrestrial vertebrates have been successfully introduced into the islands, but only one, a lizard, is native there. It belongs to a North American genus, but the species is endemic. Land birds are represented by many species, but none are endemic, for Bermuda is on one of the major migration routes for North American birds; hence it is not at all isolated from the viewpoint of the birds. Bats are also common to the mainland and the islands because these flying mammals can readily cross the water barrier. But the land molluscs include a high proportion of endemics, no doubt because of the rarity of a successful crossing of the water barrier.

"The only understandable basis for these facts is Darwin's hypothesis, that the islands were colonized from the mainland, with the colonists becoming modified subsequently. As they spread to the various islands of the archipelago, each isolated population was modified independently, with the result that groups of closely related, endemic species were formed. The connection, then, between the various similar species of an archipelago and of the nearest continent is simply heredity.

"These, then, are the main outlines of the biogeographical evidences for evolution. It is little wonder that first hand experience with so impressive and persuasive a series of facts should have suggested to Darwin the possibility that species are mutable."

-- Edward O. Dodson, *A Textbook of Evolution* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1952), pp. 28-32.

"Therefore, what I propose to do is to select for such exhaustive analysis a few of what may be termed the most oceanic of oceanic islands -- that is to say, those oceanic islands which are most widely separated from mainlands, and which, therefore, furnish the most unquestionable of test cases as between the theories of special creation and genetic descent.

"**Azores.** -- A group of volcanic islands, nine in number, about 900 miles from the coast of Portugal, and surrounded by ocean depths of 1,800 to 2,500 fathoms. There is geological evidence that the origin